

## SELF SACRIFICE.

BY MRS. J. J. BURGER.

There is no form of heroism in life grander, more noble, and more truly heroine than self sacrifice. The mind and heart that can put aside self for the sake of others may seem to the thoughtless observer to be "wasting sweetness in the desert air." But if nowhere in this imperfect life do they find their reward, there is in store for them a reward more lasting than gold and gems and the praise of men. A life of self-sacrifice is a living prayer that will never end. The fine mind which buds in youth with promise of bloom and full fruitage, in due season, is often checked in its development by unfavorable circumstances and their doomed obscurity.

Duty to self is forgotten in duty to others. The attainment of learning or of wealth brings not such true glory as the surrender of comfort. It may be seen in the surrender of the more comfortable seat or the readiness to lay aside a right in consideration of the feelings of others. True gentleness is the exercise of this spirit in little things.

There are not many of us who are called upon to make great sacrifices. Helping one another is the secret of happy living. The culture of this should be our daily attention. It is a beautiful feature of character to resolve every day to give up some minor comfort to some one else. Great excellencies are cultivated by little exercise.

Some will say have we not a right to do as we like with what we possess? But we must remember that liberty is not doing what we like to do but what we ought. I remember once of reading an account of two brothers in Mass., going to the forest to gather nuts. Night and a sudden storm came on and they were unable to reach their home or endure the severe cold and were frozen to death. When the bodies of the little victims to the bitter night were found it was noticed that the elder had made in tender solicitude every effort to save the younger. He had taken off his own coat to wrap his little brother in and clasped him in his arms. All had been in vain. They both lay in the strong embrace of death, their cheeks covered with frozen

tears. We are so formed that we can not regard this fact without emotion and admiration of the spirit of sacrifice displayed in this lad. It is a popular proverb that self preservation is the first law of nature, and there is no doubt it is a law of wide spread application. But in humanity there appears to be a higher law, a principle of self-sacrifice. It is that awakens our highest praise and love. What Christ is to us we ought in our little human measure to be to others. Christ came to our world to pour divine kindness on weary, needy, perishing human lives. The Christian spirit truly in our hearts should send us out on the same mission. There is need everywhere of love's ministry. And when we learn that he that multiplith possessions multiplith troubles, we should be willing to share with those less fortunate than ourselves. Only a few verses in one of the twenty-eight chapters of the Acts of the Apostles tells of the life of Dorcas; yet they are so clear and simple that we all know just what kind of a woman she was. One practical lesson she has been teaching ever since. The poor we are always to have with us. What can we do for them?

Christians have been asking. The life of Dorcas answers that question. We can give loving service to others. This principle finds its highest illustration in the life of our dear Saviour. Therein is seen divine sacrifice. He did not come to please himself as some of us want to do but for our good of the human race. His was the sublimest sacrifice of all eternity the manifestation of the unmeasurable love of God to sinful man.

## HOW TO MEET TROUBLE.

The followers of Christ cannot expect to be relieved from trouble in this life. But they may overcome in the midst of it all, even as Christ overcame the world. When trouble is thus conquered there is sure to follow a peace in the soul beyond expression.

The Christian knows how to meet trouble by keeping in mind the unfailing love and providential care of his heavenly Father. He finds in the Scriptures abundant assurance that

God thinks upon him at all times, and causes "all things" to work for his good. "The Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly;" that is, who walk in the sunlight or shadow, reverently, sincerely, obediently. He accepts the ills of life as a necessary part of this probationary period, not repining on account of his lot, as though God might have ordered it otherwise. The study of God's character, therefore, as unfolded in the sacred writings, is the way to meet all difficulties successfully, whether of mind, body or estate.

It must have been through the perfect disclosure of God's character granted to Job that he could lift up his eyes toward heaven and say: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." Denied all earthly good, bereft of kindred and friends, afflicted in body, assaulted by Satan, this man became the fitting example to all ages of perfect peace and patience. And this experience came to him, as it comes to us all only by the knowledge of God, which is "eternal life."

It is important that we should remember that God's love is especially shone toward us in the troubles that are directly traceable to our own mistakes of judgment; yes, even those which arise from our sinful conduct. We may well believe that He did not choose that we should commit these errors and acts of disobedience. He is not thus the Author of disorder and sin. We are responsible for all our wrong-doing. But His matchless pity is great enough not only to provide a plan of forgiveness, but reaches even further, making these our shortcomings the occasion of spiritual development—of opening the eyes of our understanding to behold His glory and of strengthening our purposes to live according to His will. Let no one, therefore, despair. Whatever our failures may have been let us commit our souls to Him in all our trials even joyfully enduring the woes of life, however they may have arisen, as seeing Him who is invisible. "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."—*The N. Y. Christian Advocate.*